IN THE HIGH COURT OF GUJARAT AT AHMEDABAD

SPECIAL CIVIL APPLICATION No 15698 of 2003

For Approval and Signature:

HON'BLE MR.JUSTICE D.P.BUCH

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1. Whether Reporters of Local Papers may be allowed to see the judgements? : YES

2. To be referred to the Reporter or not? : NO

3. Whether Their Lordships wish to see the fair copy of the judgement? : NO

4. Whether this case involves a substantial question of law as to the interpretation of the Constitution of India, 1950 of any Order made thereunder? : NO

5. Whether it is to be circulated to the concerned Magistrate/Magistrates,Judge/Judges,Tribunal/Tribunals? : NO

RANIBEN W/O HARESH KARSANBHAI BHIL

Versus

COMMISSIONER OF POLICE

Appearance:

1. Special Civil Application No. 15698 of 2003

MR ANIL S DAVE for Petitioner No. 1

MR KAMEN N SHUKLA for Petitioner No. 1

Ms Mita Panchal, AGP for Respondent No. 1-3

CORAM : HON'BLE MR.JUSTICE D.P.BUCH

Date of decision: 23/03/2004

ORAL JUDGEMENT

The petitioner-detenu has preferred this petition

under Article 226 of the Constitution of India for appropriate writ, order or direction for quashing and setting aside an order dated 10.10.2003 passed by respondent No.1 under section 3(2) of the Gujarat Prevention of Anti-social Activities Act, 1985 (for short, 'the PASA Act') directing detention of the present petitioner on the ground that three offences were registered against the petitioner on 23.6.2002, 16.8.2003 and 8.10.2003 pertaining to Prohibition Police Station, Northern Region and Sardarnagar Police Station Ahmedabad City and that the petitioner was guilty of violating 'public order'. The petitioner was arrested on the date of the order itself and he is under detention since then. The petitioner has challenged the aforesaid order of the detention on various grounds. It has been contended that the petitioner has not committed any violation of public order and that the order has been passed against the petitioner without proper application of mind. That therefore, the order of detention is illegal and deserves to be set aside. The petitioner has, therefore, prayed that the impugned order of detention be set aside and the petitioner may be set at liberty forthwith.

2. On receiving the petition, rule was issued and in response to the service of notice of rule, Ms. Mita Panchal, learned AGP has appeared. At the stage of final hearing, learned Advocate for the petitioner has argued that though three offences have been registered against the petitioner during the period mentioned above, the petitioner cannot be shown to be a person who could be treated to be dangerous person or a person who has committed violation of public order and, therefore, the detaining authority ought not to have passed the order in question directing his detention in terms of the said order.

3. On going through the detention order dated 10.10.2003 placed at page no.13, it is found that three offences have been registered against the petitioner during the aforesaid period. They all related to the offences punishable under section 66 (1)(b) and 66 (E) read with section 81 of the Bombay Prohibition Act, 1949. It was alleged against the petitioner that he was found in possession of illicit liquor without pass or permit and thereby he has committed offence. The detaining authority, on consideration of the above, found that the petitioner was a bootlegger and therefore, he was required to be detained. Accordingly the impugned order of detention was passed against the petitioner. The petitioner has challenged the above order on several grounds.

4. On this aspect of the case, we may simply refer to a decision dated 26.2.2004 of this Court in Special Civil Application No.16542/2003 (Coram: Hon'ble Mr Justice N G Nandi). Considering the above decision, it is very clear that even if the allegations made against the petitioner are taken to be true as they stand, the alleged activities of the petitioner may amount to a threat to law and order situation and it would not amount to a threat to public order. The order of detention can be passed only if there is a threat to public order and such an order cannot be passed if it amounts to a threat to law and order situation. Since the said requirement is not there in this case, the order of the detention passed against the petitioner cannot be sustained in the eye of law. In other words, the impugned detention order is required to be quashed and set aside.

5. For the foregoing reasons, this petition is allowed. The impugned order dated 10.10.2003 passed by respondent No.1 in exercise of powers under section 3(2) of the PASA Act detaining the present petitioner, is ordered to be set aside. The detenu is ordered to be set at liberty forthwith, if no longer required in any other case. Rule is made absolute to the aforesaid extent. No order as to costs. D.S. permitted.

[D P Buch, J.]

msp